

Establishing a Homeowner's Association (HOA) Dog Park in Loudoun County

In only the Planned Development Housing (PD-H) Zoning District, uses of common open space may include a dog park provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the dog park is non-commercial in nature; and 2) the homeowners' association (HOA) for such PD-H Zoning District owns and operates the dog park and owns the common open space upon which the dog park is located. Such dog park may be open to the public for a fee, provided the intent of the open space requirements is maintained. In addition, if dogs are to be unleashed, the dog park must be fenced. A zoning permit is required to establish a dog park. If a parking area or other constructed facilities are to be provided, a site plan is also required. Further, if grading of 5,000 square feet or more is required to establish the dog park, a Grading Permit will also be required.

Although not required, the following are recommended guidelines for establishing a dog park:

1. A dog park should be a minimum of one-half acre in size.
2. The dog park should be located in areas with adequate drainage.
3. When locating a dog park, areas of floodplain (i.e. Land within the Floodplain Overlay District of the County's Zoning Ordinance), wetlands, steep slopes and stream buffers should be avoided.
4. If dogs are to be unleashed, the County requires that the dog park be fenced. It is recommended that the fence be at least four to six-feet high. It is also recommended that the fence be equipped with a double-gated entry to keep dogs from escaping and to facilitate wheel chair access.
5. Grassy areas should be mowed regularly.
6. Separate areas should be provided for small and large dogs. This will enable large dog owners to allow their pets to run more freely, while protecting smaller dogs that may not be suited to the enthusiastic play of larger breeds.
7. Signs should be posted at the dog park listing: 1) the hours of operation of the dog park; 2) the rules and regulations pertaining to the park; and 3) the phone number(s) to call to report a dog problem or lost pet.
8. A minimum of one waste bag dispenser and one covered trash receptacle should be located at each entrance to the dog park enclosure.
9. Shade and water for both dogs and owners should be provided.
10. Benches and tables for dog owners should be provided.